

INDEPENDENT ARTIST RELEASE KIT

A REPEATABLE RELEASE SYSTEM FOR INDEPENDENT ARTISTS

PLAN → PITCH → PROMOTE → TRACK

CHECKLISTS • WORKSHEETS • CALENDARS • TRACKERS

START HERE

YOUR RELEASE ROADMAP

Open the kit. Find your stage. Do the next thing.

01 PLAN

Build the release before release day.

02 PITCH

Prepare the story and pitch.

03 PROMOTE

Know what to post and when.

04 TRACK

Learn what happened and improve.

START HERE

Your song is finished. Now it's time to build the release.

This kit gives you a simple system for planning, pitching, promoting, and tracking your music release without trying to figure everything out at the last minute.

Work through the kit in this order:

PLAN → PITCH → PROMOTE → TRACK

Start with your release date and work backward.

You do not need to complete everything at once. Find the stage you're in, complete the next task, and keep moving.

HOW TO USE THIS KIT

PLAN – Build your timeline, prepare your distributor submission, and get your artist profiles ready.

PITCH – Prepare your Spotify editorial pitch and Canvas.

PROMOTE – Plan your pre-release content, release-day activity, and 30-day promotion.

TRACK – Record playlist activity and post-release performance so your next rollout gets smarter.

THE GOAL

This is not about making every release perfect. It's about having a repeatable process.

Instead of asking “What am I supposed to do next?” open the kit, find your stage, and do the next thing.

USE IT AGAIN

This kit is designed to be reused. Use it for your next single, then use it again for the one after that. The more releases you run through the system, the more useful your own notes and data become.

Your purchase also includes editable companion tools for the 30-Day Content Calendar, Playlist Tracker, and Post-Release Analytics Tracker. Open them from your product access page.

02 • INDEPENDENT ARTIST RELEASE KIT

PLAN

Build the release before
release day.

INCLUDES:

- Release Timeline
- Distributor Checklist
- DSP Profile Checklist

PLAN • PITCH • PROMOTE • TRACK

RELEASE TIMELINE

Work backward from release day.

A strong release usually feels easier because the important work happened before the song went live.

Use this timeline as your default starting point. Adjust it when your distributor, collaborators, label, or campaign needs more time.

4+ WEEKS BEFORE RELEASE

- ☐ Finalize the master
- ☐ Finalize cover artwork
- ☐ Confirm song title and artist name
- ☐ Confirm featured artists and collaborators
- ☐ Confirm songwriter / producer credits
- ☐ Choose the release date
- ☐ Prepare distributor metadata
- ☐ Upload the release to your distributor
- ☐ Make sure the release is being delivered to the correct artist profiles
- ☐ Create your basic promotion plan
- ☐ Decide what content you need to create before release day

Goal: Get the release into the distribution pipeline early enough that you are not rushing later.

3 WEEKS BEFORE RELEASE

- ☐ Confirm your distributor accepted the release
- ☐ Check Spotify for Artists for the upcoming release
- ☐ Check your artist profiles for accuracy
- ☐ Prepare your Spotify editorial pitch
- ☐ Prepare your Canvas or other visual assets
- ☐ Create teaser clips
- ☐ Create release artwork variations for social media
- ☐ Prepare your pre-save / smart link if you are using one
- ☐ Start organizing your release-day posts

Goal: Make sure the release exists where it should and start preparing the campaign around it.

2 WEEKS BEFORE RELEASE

- ☐ Submit your Spotify editorial pitch
- ☐ Review your artist bio, profile image, links, and Artist Pick options
- ☐ Upload or prepare Canvas where available
- ☐ Begin your pre-release content rollout
- ☐ Share your pre-save / smart link
- ☐ Send the release to collaborators so they can prepare posts
- ☐ Schedule or draft key social posts
- ☐ Finish your release-day checklist

Spotify recommends pitching your focus track at least two weeks before release for editorial consideration.

Goal: Give the platforms and your audience enough time to understand that a release is coming.

7 DAYS BEFORE RELEASE

- ☐ Confirm the song is still scheduled correctly
- ☐ Double-check Spotify for Artists
- ☐ Review your submitted Spotify pitch
- ☐ Confirm all release links you can access

- ☐ Test your pre-save / smart link
- ☐ Post another teaser or story
- ☐ Prepare release-day captions
- ☐ Prepare email / text / community announcements
- ☐ Make sure your collaborators know the release date
- ☐ Finish any final short-form video content

Spotify says pitching at least 7 days before release allows the selected song to be included in your followers' Release Radar.

Goal: Stop building new infrastructure and start checking that everything works.

24-48 HOURS BEFORE RELEASE

- ☐ Confirm your release-day content is ready
- ☐ Confirm artwork and video files are on your phone/computer
- ☐ Check your links
- ☐ Draft or schedule your first release announcement
- ☐ Prepare Stories / Shorts / Reels / TikTok content
- ☐ Charge your devices and make sure you can access your accounts
- ☐ Review your Release-Day Checklist

Goal: Remove last-minute friction.

RELEASE DAY

- ☐ Confirm the song is live on the major DSPs
- ☐ Test the Spotify, Apple Music, YouTube, and smart links
- ☐ Check that the correct artwork, title, credits, and artist profiles appear
- ☐ Post your main release announcement
- ☐ Update your bio/link hub
- ☐ Share Stories and short-form content
- ☐ Notify collaborators
- ☐ Respond to early comments and shares
- ☐ Save screenshots of any meaningful early placements or activity
- ☐ Start your analytics baseline

Goal: Make it easy for people to find, hear, and share the song.

1-3 DAYS AFTER RELEASE

- ☐ Keep promoting—do not disappear after release day
- ☐ Share a different clip or angle from the song
- ☐ Repost listener reactions and user-generated content
- ☐ Check playlist activity
- ☐ Record early analytics
- ☐ Thank supporters and collaborators
- ☐ Identify which posts are getting the most response

Goal: Learn what is getting attention and lean into it.

1 WEEK AFTER RELEASE

- ☐ Update your Playlist Tracker
- ☐ Update your Post-Release Analytics Tracker
- ☐ Review streams, listeners, saves, follows, and content performance
- ☐ Identify your best-performing content
- ☐ Repurpose that content
- ☐ Keep promoting the song with a fresh angle
- ☐ Write down what you would change next time

Goal: Turn the release into usable information.

2-4 WEEKS AFTER RELEASE

- ☐ Continue releasing new content around the song
- ☐ Track playlist additions and removals
- ☐ Compare weekly performance
- ☐ Review your strongest traffic sources
- ☐ Save useful screenshots, links, and campaign notes
- ☐ Decide what worked
- ☐ Decide what did not work
- ☐ Add those lessons to your plan for the next release

Goal: Build a repeatable release process instead of starting from zero every time.

THE SIMPLE VERSION

If all of that feels like too much, remember this:

4+ weeks out: PLAN

2+ weeks out: PITCH

Release week: PROMOTE

After release: TRACK

You do not need to do everything perfectly.

You need enough time to do the important things before they become emergencies.

QUICK NOTE

This timeline is a practical recommendation, not a universal DSP requirement. Distributor processing times and platform features can vary, so always check the current requirements for the services you use.

The Spotify-specific timing above is current: Spotify presently recommends pitching a focus track at least two weeks before release for editorial consideration, while its official support guidance says at least seven days before release for the pitched track to be selected for followers' Release Radar.

DISTRIBUTOR CHECKLIST

Use this before you hit "Submit."

Your distributor is sending your release to Spotify, Apple Music, YouTube Music, Amazon Music, and other DSPs.

Small mistakes here can create bigger problems later.

Use this checklist while you upload your release.

BEFORE YOU OPEN YOUR DISTRIBUTOR

- ☐ Final master is complete
- ☐ Cover artwork is complete
- ☐ Song title is final
- ☐ Artist name is written exactly how it should appear
- ☐ Featured artists are confirmed
- ☐ Producer credits are confirmed
- ☐ Songwriter/composer credits are confirmed
- ☐ Release date is chosen
- ☐ Explicit/clean status is confirmed
- ☐ Lyrics are final, if you plan to submit them elsewhere
- ☐ Everyone involved agrees on the final version of the song

Goal: Do not start distribution while you are still changing the release.

AUDIO FILE

- ☐ Upload the final mastered version
- ☐ Make sure it is the correct song/version
- ☐ Make sure there is no accidental silence at the beginning or end
- ☐ Listen to the exported file from start to finish
- ☐ Check for clipping, glitches, clicks, or bad edits
- ☐ Confirm the file meets your distributor's current audio requirements
- ☐ Keep a backup copy of the final master

Important: Use the distributor's current file specifications. Do not assume every distributor accepts the same formats.

SONG TITLE

Enter the title exactly how you want listeners to see it.

Example:

Gold Outta Mud

- ☐ Spelling is correct
- ☐ Capitalization is correct
- ☐ No accidental extra spaces
- ☐ Version information is included only when needed

Examples of version information:

Remix

Live

Acoustic

Radio Edit

Do not add extra marketing language such as:

NEW HIT SINGLE

STREAM NOW

2026 BANGER

Keep the metadata professional.

ARTIST NAME

- ☐ Primary artist name is correct
- ☐ Spelling matches your existing DSP profiles
- ☐ Featured artist names are correct
- ☐ Collaborators are assigned the correct role
- ☐ Existing artist profiles are selected when your distributor allows profile mapping

This is important.

A spelling difference can sometimes cause a release to appear on the wrong artist page or create a duplicate artist profile.

FEATURED ARTISTS

If another artist appears on the song:

- ☐ Confirm whether they are a primary artist or featured artist
- ☐ Enter their artist name exactly as they use it publicly
- ☐ Use their existing DSP profile information when available
- ☐ Confirm they know the release date
- ☐ Confirm they approve the final version

Do not put every collaborator in the song title.

Use the distributor's artist-credit fields whenever possible.

SONGWRITER & COMPOSER CREDITS

- ☐ Legal songwriter names are correct
- ☐ Composer credits are correct
- ☐ Producer credits are documented
- ☐ Ownership percentages are agreed upon separately
- ☐ You know who owns the master recording

Artist names and legal songwriter names are not always the same thing.

Keep a separate record of the real legal names connected to the song.

EXPLICIT CONTENT

- ☐ Mark the track explicit if the lyrics require it
- ☐ Do not mark a song clean if explicit words are still present
- ☐ If you have both explicit and clean versions, make sure you upload the correct one

Do not guess.

Use your distributor's current definition and rules for explicit content.

COVER ART

- ☐ Artwork is final
- ☐ Artist name is correct if displayed
- ☐ Song/project title is correct if displayed
- ☐ Image is high resolution
- ☐ Image is not blurry or pixelated
- ☐ Artwork matches your distributor's required dimensions
- ☐ Artwork does not contain unapproved logos or copyrighted images
- ☐ No URLs, social handles, prices, or promotional text unless the distributor specifically allows them

Keep a full-resolution backup of the artwork.

RELEASE DATE

- ☐ Date is correct
- ☐ Date gives you enough time for promotion
- ☐ Date gives your distributor enough processing time
- ☐ Date gives the DSPs enough time to receive the release
- ☐ You have enough lead time to pitch Spotify if that is part of your plan

Recommended workflow: Upload early enough that your release appears in Spotify for Artists before you need to submit your editorial pitch.

ISRC

An ISRC identifies a specific sound recording.

- ☐ Confirm whether your distributor will assign an ISRC
- ☐ If you already have an ISRC for this exact recording, enter it only if your distributor allows it
- ☐ Do not create a new ISRC for the same recording just because you are changing distributors unless there is a legitimate reason to do so
- ☐ Save your ISRC in your release records

Remixes, alternate recordings, and substantially different versions may require different identifiers.

Follow your distributor's current guidance.

UPC / RELEASE IDENTIFIER

A UPC or similar release code identifies the release as a product.

- ☐ Confirm whether your distributor assigns it automatically
- ☐ Save the UPC after submission

- ☐ Keep it with your release records

You may need it later when tracking or discussing the release.

LABEL NAME

If the distributor asks for a label:

- ☐ Enter your label name if you actually release through one
- ☐ Follow the distributor's instructions if you are self-releasing

Do not invent a record label just because the field exists.

COPYRIGHT INFORMATION

You may see fields such as:

® Sound Recording Copyright

© Copyright

- ☐ Enter the correct year
- ☐ Enter the correct rights holder
- ☐ Make sure you understand who owns the master before submitting

If you are unsure about ownership, resolve it before distributing the song.

LANGUAGE

- ☐ Select the correct language of the lyrics
- ☐ Select instrumental if applicable and available
- ☐ Double-check any language-specific metadata

Accurate metadata helps DSPs organize and display your release properly.

GENRE

- ☐ Choose the closest available primary genre
- ☐ Choose a secondary genre if your distributor allows it
- ☐ Describe the music honestly

Do not choose a popular genre just because you think it will get more streams.

TERRITORIES

Most independent artists distribute worldwide when available.

Before submitting:

- ☐ Check which territories are selected
- ☐ Confirm there are no ownership or licensing restrictions
- ☐ Make sure you have the rights to distribute the recording in those territories

If another company controls rights in certain countries, resolve that before release.

DSP / STORE SELECTION

Review where the release is being sent.

Common destinations may include:

Spotify

Apple Music

YouTube Music

Amazon Music

TIDAL

Deezer

TikTok and other social/music platforms

- ☐ Select the platforms you want
- ☐ Understand that available platforms vary by distributor
- ☐ Confirm any optional social-media delivery settings

ARTIST PROFILE MAPPING

This is one of the most important checks.

- ☐ Spotify release is going to the correct artist profile
- ☐ Apple Music release is going to the correct artist profile
- ☐ YouTube Music mapping is correct when available
- ☐ Featured artists are mapped correctly when possible

If you are a new artist, save any profile information your distributor gives you so you can claim your artist accounts later.

RELEASE TYPE

Confirm whether you are uploading:

- ☐ Single
- ☐ EP
- ☐ Album

Make sure the track count and release type match your distributor's rules.

PREVIOUSLY RELEASED MUSIC

If this exact recording has already been released:

- ☐ Answer the distributor's "previously released?" question accurately
- ☐ Use the original release date when required
- ☐ Reuse existing identifiers where appropriate
- ☐ Do not present an old recording as brand-new metadata just to reset its history

FINAL REVIEW BEFORE SUBMISSION

Before you hit Submit, stop and check everything one more time.

- ☐ Correct audio file
- ☐ Correct artwork
- ☐ Correct song title
- ☐ Correct artist name
- ☐ Correct featured artists
- ☐ Correct songwriter/composer information
- ☐ Correct explicit status
- ☐ Correct genre
- ☐ Correct release date
- ☐ Correct copyright information
- ☐ Correct artist-profile mapping
- ☐ Correct territories
- ☐ Correct store/DSP selection

Then:

Read the entire submission from top to bottom before paying or submitting.

A five-minute review can save days of corrections later.

AFTER YOU SUBMIT

- ☐ Save your distributor confirmation
- ☐ Save the release URL or dashboard link
- ☐ Save the UPC

- ☐ Save each track's ISRC
- ☐ Take a screenshot of the scheduled release details
- ☐ Check the distributor dashboard for warnings or errors
- ☐ Watch for emails requesting corrections
- ☐ Confirm the release was accepted
- ☐ Check Spotify for Artists once the release has been delivered
- ☐ Confirm the release is connected to the correct artist profile

Create one folder for every release and keep:

Master + Artwork + Metadata + ISRC + UPC + Distributor confirmation + Links + Analytics

That folder becomes the permanent record of your release.

RED FLAGS — STOP BEFORE SUBMITTING IF:

The song title is still changing.

A collaborator has not approved the release.

You are unsure who owns the master.

You do not know the songwriter credits.

The artwork is unfinished.

The artist profile looks wrong.

You accidentally uploaded the wrong master.

You are rushing because you chose a release date that is too close.

Fix the problem first.

Distribution is easier to correct before submission than after release day.

Check the music.
Check the metadata.
Check the people.
Check the date.
Check the profiles.
Then submit.

DSP PROFILE CHECKLIST

Make sure listeners land on the right artist.

Getting the song distributed is only part of the job.

When somebody hears your music and taps your name, your artist profile should look intentional, current, and easy to recognize.

Use this checklist to prepare your DSP profiles before release day.

BEFORE YOU START

Gather these first:

- ☐ Artist name exactly as it should appear
- ☐ Artist profile photo
- ☐ Header/banner image where supported
- ☐ Short artist bio
- ☐ Social links
- ☐ Website or link hub

- ☐ Current release artwork
- ☐ Upcoming release date
- ☐ Existing artist profile URLs
- ☐ Distributor confirmation that the release is being delivered

Goal: Keep your identity consistent everywhere.

SPOTIFY FOR ARTISTS

CLAIM / ACCESS

- ☐ Confirm you have access to Spotify for Artists
- ☐ Confirm you are managing the correct artist profile
- ☐ Make sure your upcoming release is connected to that profile
- ☐ Confirm collaborators are mapped correctly where applicable

If this is your first release, work through your distributor and Spotify's current artist-claim process to make sure you access the correct profile.

PROFILE PHOTO

- ☐ Use a clear image that represents the artist
- ☐ Make sure the image still reads at thumbnail size
- ☐ Avoid tiny text inside the profile photo
- ☐ Keep the image consistent with your other platforms

Your profile picture should make it easy for a listener to recognize you again.

ARTIST BIO

- ☐ Bio clearly explains who you are
- ☐ Mention your sound, background, or creative identity
- ☐ Keep the first few lines strong
- ☐ Remove outdated release information
- ☐ Check spelling, capitalization, and names

A useful bio answers:

Who are you?

What kind of music do you make?

What makes your work worth remembering?

Do not turn the bio into a résumé.

ARTIST PICK

Where available:

- ☐ Check whether Artist Pick is active
- ☐ Feature your current or upcoming release when appropriate
- ☐ Update outdated selections
- ☐ Add context or a short message if the platform allows it

Use the most valuable profile real estate to point listeners toward the music you are currently promoting.

UPCOMING RELEASE

- ☐ Check Music / Upcoming or the current equivalent inside Spotify for Artists
- ☐ Confirm the correct track appears
- ☐ Confirm release date
- ☐ Confirm artist mapping
- ☐ Prepare your editorial pitch if the song is eligible
- ☐ Add or prepare Canvas where available

If the upcoming release is missing, do not assume it will fix itself.

Check your distributor and artist mapping.

CANVAS

Where supported:

- ☐ Visual matches the song or release identity
- ☐ Loop feels natural
- ☐ Important details are not too small
- ☐ Avoid relying on tiny text
- ☐ Preview before finalizing
- ☐ Confirm it is attached to the correct song

The visual should support the music, not distract from it.

APPLE MUSIC FOR ARTISTS

ACCESS

- ☐ Claim or access your Apple Music for Artists profile
- ☐ Confirm you are viewing the correct artist
- ☐ Confirm your release is mapped correctly
- ☐ Check the profile after the release is delivered

ARTIST IMAGE

- ☐ Upload or review your current artist image where the platform allows it
- ☐ Make sure it matches your branding
- ☐ Avoid outdated promotional images
- ☐ Check how the image crops

PROFILE INFORMATION

- ☐ Review your artist information
- ☐ Confirm spelling and artist name
- ☐ Check current releases
- ☐ Look for duplicate or incorrect artist pages
- ☐ Request corrections through the proper platform/distributor process if needed

YOUTUBE / YOUTUBE MUSIC

CHANNEL CHECK

- ☐ Confirm your artist name is consistent
- ☐ Make sure your channel image matches your DSP branding
- ☐ Add banner artwork
- ☐ Update your About section
- ☐ Add relevant links
- ☐ Make sure important releases are easy to find

OFFICIAL ARTIST PRESENCE

If you qualify for or already have an Official Artist Channel:

- ☐ Confirm releases are connected properly
- ☐ Check that your music is appearing under the correct artist
- ☐ Organize playlists and featured content
- ☐ Feature your newest release or visualizer

Eligibility and setup can vary, so follow YouTube's current artist-channel requirements.

RELEASE CONTENT

Prepare:

- ☐ Official audio or visualizer if appropriate
- ☐ Shorts clips
- ☐ Thumbnail artwork
- ☐ Description
- ☐ Credits
- ☐ Release links
- ☐ Pinned comment or CTA

Do not wait until release morning to build all of this.

AMAZON MUSIC FOR ARTISTS

If you use Amazon Music:

- ☐ Claim your artist profile where available
- ☐ Confirm your music is mapped correctly
- ☐ Review artist image and profile information
- ☐ Check your current releases
- ☐ Save your artist profile link

TIDAL, DEEZER & OTHER DSPs

You do not need to obsess over every platform before launch.

Prioritize the platforms your audience actually uses.

For each important DSP:

- ☐ Find your artist page
- ☐ Confirm it is the correct artist
- ☐ Check releases
- ☐ Check artwork
- ☐ Check spelling
- ☐ Save the artist URL
- ☐ Claim the profile if an artist-management tool is available
- ☐ Request corrections if music is on the wrong page

PROFILE CONSISTENCY CHECK

Open your major platforms side by side.

Compare:

- ☐ Artist name
- ☐ Profile photo
- ☐ Branding
- ☐ Bio/message
- ☐ Current release
- ☐ Links
- ☐ Spelling
- ☐ Featured content

You do not need every platform to look identical.

They should clearly look like the same artist.

LINK CHECK

Save your important URLs in one place.

ARTIST LINKS

Spotify:

Apple Music:

YouTube:

Amazon Music:

TIDAL: _____

Deezer:

Website / Link Hub:

Instagram:

TikTok:

Other:

LINK HUB / BIO LINK

If you use a link hub:

- ☐ Current release is easy to find
- ☐ Old campaign links are removed or moved down
- ☐ Spotify link works
- ☐ Apple Music link works
- ☐ YouTube link works
- ☐ Pre-save or smart link works
- ☐ Buttons are clearly labeled
- ☐ Page works on mobile
- ☐ No broken links

Your listener should not have to hunt for the song.

BRANDING CHECK

Ask:

If somebody discovers me on Spotify and then visits my Instagram, will they know they found the same artist?

Check:

- ☐ Same artist name
- ☐ Similar profile image or visual identity
- ☐ Same current release artwork
- ☐ Consistent colors/style

☐ Same release date

☐ Same messaging

Consistency builds recognition.

RELEASE-WEEK PROFILE CHECK

3–7 DAYS BEFORE RELEASE

☐ Check Spotify for Artists

☐ Check Apple Music for Artists

☐ Check YouTube / YouTube Music

☐ Test your link hub

☐ Prepare profile updates

☐ Make sure your current campaign is visible

☐ Save all important artist URLs

RELEASE-DAY PROFILE CHECK

When the song goes live:

☐ Open Spotify

☐ Open Apple Music

☐ Open YouTube Music

☐ Open other priority DSPs

☐ Search the artist name

☐ Open the song

☐ Test playback

☐ Confirm artwork

☐ Confirm title

☐ Confirm featured artists

☐ Confirm artist page

☐ Confirm links

Take screenshots of anything that looks wrong.

Then contact your distributor or the platform's official artist-support process as appropriate.

WRONG ARTIST PAGE?

This happens.

If your release appears under another artist with the same or similar name:

☐ Save the incorrect release URL

☐ Save the incorrect artist-profile URL

☐ Save your correct artist-profile URL

☐ Find the UPC and ISRC

☐ Take screenshots

☐ Contact your distributor or official DSP artist support

☐ Clearly explain where the release should be moved

Do not create several new profiles trying to fix it yourself.

Document the problem and use the official correction process.

DUPLICATE ARTIST PROFILE?

If you suddenly have two artist pages:

- ☐ Identify which profile should remain your main profile
- ☐ Save both profile URLs
- ☐ Save release links
- ☐ Save your UPC / ISRC information
- ☐ Contact the appropriate support channel
- ☐ Ask for the catalog to be mapped correctly

Handle this early.

A split catalog can confuse both listeners and your own analytics.

YOUR PROFILE SHOULD ANSWER THREE QUESTIONS

When a new listener lands on your profile, they should quickly understand:

1. WHO IS THIS?

Clear name and recognizable image.

2. WHAT SHOULD I LISTEN TO?

Your current release should be easy to find.

3. WHERE DO I GO NEXT?

Your links, catalog, and supporting content should make the next action obvious.

FINAL DSP PROFILE CHECK

Before release week, confirm:

- ☐ Spotify for Artists access
- ☐ Apple Music for Artists access
- ☐ YouTube presence
- ☐ Other priority DSP profiles checked
- ☐ Correct artist mapping
- ☐ Current profile photo
- ☐ Updated bio where applicable
- ☐ Current release featured where possible
- ☐ Spotify pitch completed if applicable
- ☐ Canvas prepared where applicable
- ☐ Link hub updated
- ☐ Artist links saved
- ☐ No obvious duplicate profiles
- ☐ No broken links

Be easy to recognize.
Be easy to find.
Make the new song easy to play.
Make the next step obvious.

03 • INDEPENDENT ARTIST RELEASE KIT

PITCH

Get your song ready for
Spotify editorial
consideration.

INCLUDES:

- Spotify Pitch Builder
- 500-Character Pitch Worksheet
- Canvas Checklist

PLAN • PITCH • PROMOTE • TRACK

SPOTIFY PITCH BUILDER

Do not start with the 500-character box.

A strong pitch is easier to write when you first organize the facts about the song.

Use this worksheet to collect the information you need before you open Spotify for Artists.

The goal is not to make the song sound bigger than it is.

The goal is to help the right editor quickly understand:

What does it sound like?

What is it about?

Who made it?

Why does it matter?

What are you doing to support the release?

FIRST: CHECK ELIGIBILITY

Before writing anything:

- ☐ The song has been delivered to Spotify
- ☐ The song is still unreleased
- ☐ The release appears in Spotify for Artists
- ☐ You have Admin or Editor access where required
- ☐ You are a primary/main artist on the song
- ☐ The release is not a compilation
- ☐ You do not already have another active song pitch

Spotify currently allows one active song pitch at a time. Once that song goes live, another eligible upcoming song can be pitched.

PART 1 — THE BASICS

Artist:

Song title:

Release date:

Project / EP / album, if applicable:

Primary genre:

Secondary genre / subgenre:

Tempo / BPM, if useful:

PART 2 — DESCRIBE THE SOUND

Do not write marketing copy yet.

Describe what somebody actually hears.

GENRE

What is the closest honest genre?

SUBGENRE

Can you narrow it further?

MOOD

Choose 2–4 words.

Examples:

Energetic

Dark

Melancholy

Fierce

Hopeful

Chill

Romantic

Reflective

Celebratory

Aggressive

Your moods:

PRODUCTION

What stands out in the beat or arrangement?

Examples:

Sparse drums

Heavy bass

Live guitar

Dark piano

Synths

808s

Orchestral elements

Sample-driven production

Boom-bap drums

Your answer:

VOCAL STYLE

How is the performance delivered?

Examples:

Melodic rap

Rapid-fire verses

Sung hook

Spoken-word sections

Chantable chorus
 Layered harmonies
 Aggressive delivery
 Your answer:

PART 3 — WHAT IS THE SONG ABOUT?

Finish this sentence:

This song is about...

Now go deeper.

What happened, idea, emotion, experience, or question inspired it?

What should the listener feel or understand?

PART 4 — WHAT MAKES THIS RECORD DISTINCT?

Do not write:

"It's different."
 Explain how.

Examples:

A West Coast rap record built around a stripped-down beat.

A breakup song over drum-and-bass production.

A singer-songwriter record built from a voice memo.

A collaboration between artists from two different scenes.

A record that connects a personal story to a larger theme.

The most distinctive thing about this record is:

PART 5 — WHO MADE IT?

Producer:

Featured artist(s):

Songwriter(s):

Other important collaborators:

Is there something relevant about the collaboration?

Do not name-drop somebody simply because they have status.

Include collaborators when their involvement helps explain the record.

PART 6 — CULTURAL / REGIONAL CONTEXT

Only include this if it actually matters to the music.

City / region connected to the record:

Scene, culture, or musical tradition connected to the record:

Why is that context relevant?

If none applies, leave it alone.

Do not force cultural tags because they seem marketable.

PART 7 — THE PROMOTION PLAN

Spotify editors may find release context useful, so be specific about what you are actually doing.

Check everything that is genuinely part of your rollout:

- ☐ TikTok videos
- ☐ Instagram Reels
- ☐ Instagram Stories
- ☐ YouTube Shorts
- ☐ YouTube visualizer
- ☐ Music video
- ☐ Lyric video
- ☐ Pre-save / smart link
- ☐ Email list
- ☐ SMS/text outreach
- ☐ Influencer / creator outreach
- ☐ Press / blog outreach
- ☐ Live performance
- ☐ Release event
- ☐ Paid advertising
- ☐ Community / Discord / Telegram
- ☐ Collaboration posts
- ☐ Other: _____

My strongest 2–4 promotional actions are:

PART 8 — YOUR RELEASE STORY

Now combine the information.

Complete these sentences:

SOUND

“[Song title] is a record built around .”

STORY

“The song explores .”

CONTEXT

“The record was created .”

PROMOTION

“The release is being supported by .”

You now have the raw material for the pitch.

THE GOLD OUTTA MUD EXAMPLE

Here is how the same framework looked for SQUIGLY – “Gold Outta Mud.”

SOUND

99 BPM West Coast hip-hop.

Sparse, trunk-rattling drums.

Dark keys.

Chantable hook.

STORY

Turning pressure and poverty into ownership.

PROJECT

PROOF OF W3RK

PROMOTION

Teaser videos across:

TikTok

Instagram

YouTube

X

Telegram

Plus:

HyperFollow pre-save

Character visuals

DSP rollout

Audius rollout

YouTube rollout

Notice the difference between collecting the facts first and trying to invent a pitch from nothing.

BEFORE OPENING SPOTIFY FOR ARTISTS

You should now be able to answer:

- ☐ What genre is this?
- ☐ What does it sound like?
- ☐ What mood does it create?
- ☐ What is the story?
- ☐ What makes it distinctive?
- ☐ Who made it?
- ☐ What cultural context actually applies?
- ☐ What are we doing to promote it?

Now you are ready to write.

500-CHARACTER PITCH WORKSHEET

Turn the facts into a short, useful pitch.

The purpose of a short pitch is not to squeeze your entire career into one paragraph.

It is to give an editor enough useful information to understand the record quickly.

Important: Spotify can change its interface and field limits. This worksheet is designed around the short description format used in the pitch process and the 500-character field encountered in our real Gold Outta Mud submission. Always follow the character limit shown in your current Spotify for Artists form.

THE FOUR-PART FORMULA

Try to fit these four elements into your pitch:

1. SOUND

What kind of record is this?

2. STORY

What is the song about?

3. DISTINCTION

What makes this particular record interesting?

4. PROMOTION

What are you actually doing to support it?

FIRST DRAFT

Do not worry about length yet.

Write naturally.

CUT THE HYPE

Delete phrases like:

This is the hottest record out.

Guaranteed hit.

Next viral song.

Future #1 single.

Spotify needs this.

Everybody loves this song.

Replace hype with information.

Instead of:

“This song is different.”

Write:

“The record pairs West Coast drums with dark keys and a chantable hook.”

Specific beats exaggerated claims.

REMOVE INFORMATION THAT DOESN'T HELP

Ask about every sentence:

Does this help somebody understand the song or rollout?

If not, cut it.

You probably do not need:

Your entire biography.

Every artist who influenced you.

Your complete recording history.

A list of accomplishments unrelated to the release.

A long explanation of why you deserve placement.

SECOND DRAFT

Rewrite the pitch tighter.

THE FILL-IN FORMULA

Use this if you are stuck:

“[Song title] is a [genre/style] record built around [distinctive production or sound]. The song explores [story/theme]. [Useful creative context]. Promotion includes [specific promotional actions] leading into the [release date/timeframe] release.”

Do not treat that as mandatory wording.

It is a structure.

GOLD OUTTA MUD — REAL EXAMPLE

The pitch used for our submission was:

“Gold Outta Mud” was built as a 99 BPM West Coast hip-hop record for SQUIGLY’s PROOF OF W3RK, pairing sparse trunk-rattling drums, dark keys and a chantable hook with a story about turning pressure and poverty into ownership. Promotion includes teaser videos across TikTok, Instagram, YouTube, X and Telegram, HyperFollow pre-save, character visuals, and a coordinated Oct. 16 DSP, Audius and YouTube rollout.

Notice what the pitch communicates:

Genre: West Coast hip-hop

Tempo: 99 BPM

Project: PROOF OF W3RK

Sound: sparse drums + dark keys

Hook: chantable

Story: pressure and poverty → ownership

Promotion: actual planned campaign activity

There is very little wasted space.

YOUR FINAL PITCH

Write the version you intend to submit:

FINAL PITCH CHECK

Before submitting:

- ☐ Song title is correct
- ☐ Genre description is accurate
- ☐ Mood is accurate
- ☐ Story is clear
- ☐ Creative context is truthful
- ☐ Promotion plan is real
- ☐ No fake statistics

- ☐ No unsupported claims
- ☐ No begging
- ☐ No guaranteed-placement language
- ☐ No unnecessary biography
- ☐ Pitch fits the current Spotify form limit

SPOTIFY TIMING NOTE

There are two useful timing benchmarks.

7 DAYS

Spotify says music should be delivered at least 7 days before release, and pitching at least 7 days ahead allows you to select the song that goes into your followers' Release Radar.

2 WEEKS

Spotify's current new-release guidance recommends pitching the focus track at least two weeks before release to give editors more time for consideration.

OUR PRACTICAL RULE

Aim for two weeks or more.

Do not build your release schedule around the minimum if you can avoid it.

SUBMITTING THE PITCH

Spotify's current workflow is:

Spotify for Artists → Music → Upcoming → Choose eligible song → Complete pitch

Spotify says additional detail helps editors understand the song.

Answer the fields in the form accurately.

Depending on the current interface, Spotify may ask about things such as:

Genre

Mood

Sound

Culture

Song style

Instrumentation

Story

Promotion

The exact interface can change.

Answer what Spotify shows you.

Do not choose categories because you think they will "game" the system.

AFTER YOU SUBMIT

- ☐ Confirm the pitch was submitted
- ☐ Review the information for obvious errors
- ☐ Save a screenshot for your release records
- ☐ Continue building the rollout
- ☐ Prepare your Canvas
- ☐ Continue pre-release promotion

Spotify currently lets eligible Admins and Editors edit the pitch until release day, but Spotify warns that editors may not see late changes.

Do not treat that as permission to wait until the last minute.

IMPORTANT

A pitch is a request for consideration.

It is not a reservation.

It is not a purchase.

It is not a guarantee.

Spotify explicitly states that pitching does not guarantee playlist placement.

CANVAS CHECKLIST

Give the song something to look at.

Canvas is Spotify's looping visual format that can accompany a song in the Now Playing experience.

Spotify currently encourages artists to prepare Canvas before a release drops.

The goal is not to make a miniature music video.

The goal is to create a visual loop that feels like part of the record.

BEFORE YOU CREATE THE CANVAS

Answer:

What is the visual identity of this release?

What colors belong to this song?

What image, motion, character, symbol, or environment represents it?

What should somebody feel when they see the loop?

CHOOSE A CONCEPT

Possible directions:

- ☐ Artist performance
- ☐ Animated cover artwork
- ☐ Character animation
- ☐ Cinematic environment
- ☐ Abstract animation
- ☐ Lyric-inspired imagery
- ☐ Looping object or symbol
- ☐ Album-world visual
- ☐ Behind-the-scenes footage
- ☐ Other: _____

Choose one strong idea.

You do not need six competing concepts inside a short loop.

VISUAL CHECK

- ☐ Matches the song's identity
- ☐ Matches the artwork/campaign
- ☐ Subject is easy to understand

- ☐ Motion is intentional
- ☐ Loop does not feel broken
- ☐ Image is sharp
- ☐ Important details are visible on a phone
- ☐ No tiny unreadable text
- ☐ No unnecessary clutter

LOOP CHECK

Watch the Canvas several times in a row.

Ask:

Can I clearly see where it restarts?

If yes, decide whether that restart feels intentional.

- ☐ Beginning and ending work together
- ☐ No awkward jump unless intentional
- ☐ Motion remains interesting after several loops
- ☐ Loop does not become distracting

MOBILE CHECK

Canvas is a mobile-first visual.

Before uploading:

- ☐ Watch it vertically
- ☐ Watch it at phone size
- ☐ Check important subject placement
- ☐ Check cropping
- ☐ Check text readability if any text exists
- ☐ Check whether UI elements may cover important visual areas

Do not design only on a large desktop monitor.

BRAND CHECK

Ask:

If somebody sees this Canvas and then sees the cover artwork, does it feel like the same release?

- ☐ Colors match
- ☐ Character/artist appearance is consistent
- ☐ Mood matches
- ☐ Typography matches if used
- ☐ Visual world feels connected

TECHNICAL CHECK

Before uploading:

- ☐ Check Spotify's current Canvas specifications
- ☐ Export in a supported format
- ☐ Confirm orientation
- ☐ Confirm duration
- ☐ Confirm file size
- ☐ Preview the final exported version

Spotify can update technical requirements.

Use the current specifications shown inside Spotify for Artists rather than relying on an old screenshot or saved note.

UPLOAD CHECK

- ☐ Correct artist account
- ☐ Correct song
- ☐ Correct Canvas file
- ☐ Preview looks right
- ☐ No unintended crop
- ☐ Loop works
- ☐ Save/submit successfully

Then reopen the song afterward and confirm that the Canvas is attached where expected.

CANVAS DOES NOT NEED TO:

Be expensive.

Be complicated.

Contain lyrics.

Contain the song title.

Look like everybody else's.

It needs to feel intentional.

FINAL PITCH TAB CHECK

Before leaving O3 PITCH, you should have:

- ☐ Completed the Spotify Pitch Builder
- ☐ Written your final short pitch
- ☐ Submitted the eligible song before release
- ☐ Saved your pitch for your records
- ☐ Prepared or uploaded your Canvas
- ☐ Continued the rest of your release campaign

**Describe the song honestly.
Tell the story clearly.
Show Spotify what you're doing with it.
Then keep promoting whether you get playlisted or not.**

04 • INDEPENDENT ARTIST RELEASE KIT

PROMOTE

**Know what to post
and when to post it.**

INCLUDES:

- **Pre-Save Checklist**
- **Release-Day Checklist**
- **30-Day Content Calendar**
- **Promotion Planner**

PLAN • PITCH • PROMOTE • TRACK

PRE-SAVE CHECKLIST

Give people somewhere to go before the song drops.

A pre-save or smart link gives your audience one place to find the release before and after release day.

The goal is not to collect a giant number just to feel successful.

The goal is to create a clear path from:

“I’m interested.”

to

“I know where to find the song.”

BEFORE YOU BUILD THE LINK

Have these ready:

- ☐ Artist name
- ☐ Song title
- ☐ Release date
- ☐ Cover artwork
- ☐ Distributor confirmation
- ☐ Spotify / DSP information when available
- ☐ Short release description
- ☐ Artist profile links
- ☐ Social links
- ☐ Website or link hub

CREATE THE PRE-SAVE / SMART LINK

Use your distributor, smart-link provider, website, or another service that supports your release.

- ☐ Create the link
- ☐ Add the correct artwork
- ☐ Confirm artist name
- ☐ Confirm song title
- ☐ Confirm release date
- ☐ Add available DSP destinations
- ☐ Add artist/social links if appropriate
- ☐ Preview the page on mobile
- ☐ Save the final URL

Do not assume the page works just because it published successfully.

Test it.

TEST THE LINK

Open it from your phone.

- ☐ Page loads quickly
- ☐ Artwork displays correctly
- ☐ Song title is correct
- ☐ Artist name is correct
- ☐ Release date is correct
- ☐ Buttons work
- ☐ Spotify option works where available

- ☐ Apple Music option works where available
- ☐ No broken images
- ☐ No old release information
- ☐ No typos

Send the link to someone else and have them test it too.

MAKE THE LINK EASY TO FIND

Add it where your audience already interacts with you.

- ☐ Instagram bio
- ☐ TikTok bio
- ☐ YouTube description
- ☐ X / social profile
- ☐ Website
- ☐ Link hub
- ☐ Email signature if useful
- ☐ Community pages
- ☐ Pinned post where appropriate

Do not make people search for it.

PRE-SAVE CONTENT

Do not post the exact same message every day.

Give people different reasons to care.

Possible angles:

- ☐ Cover-art reveal
- ☐ Release-date announcement
- ☐ Song snippet
- ☐ Lyric preview
- ☐ Story behind the song
- ☐ Studio footage
- ☐ Producer spotlight
- ☐ Featured-artist spotlight
- ☐ Character / visual-world content
- ☐ Behind-the-scenes clip
- ☐ Countdown
- ☐ Personal message from the artist

PRE-SAVE CTA IDEAS

Keep the call to action simple.

Examples:

Pre-save the new single.

Save the date.

Tap the link and be ready when it drops.

Add it now so you don't miss release day.

Avoid turning every caption into a long sales pitch.

7 DAYS BEFORE RELEASE

- ☐ Pre-save / smart link tested
- ☐ Link added to bio
- ☐ Main announcement posted
- ☐ At least 2–3 short-form clips prepared
- ☐ Collaborators have the link
- ☐ Email / text announcement prepared
- ☐ Release-day posts drafted
- ☐ Artwork files saved to phone
- ☐ Video clips saved to phone

24 HOURS BEFORE RELEASE

- ☐ Test link again
- ☐ Confirm release time/date
- ☐ Post final countdown
- ☐ Remind collaborators
- ☐ Prepare Stories
- ☐ Prepare launch caption
- ☐ Make sure all links are easy to access
- ☐ Charge devices
- ☐ Log into key accounts

One link.
One clear action.
Make it easy to find the music.

RELEASE-DAY CHECKLIST

The song is live. Now make sure everything works.

Release day should not be spent building things you could have prepared earlier.

Your job today is to:

VERIFY → ANNOUNCE → ENGAGE → TRACK

1. VERIFY THE RELEASE

Before promoting anything:

- ☐ Search the song on Spotify
- ☐ Search the song on Apple Music
- ☐ Check YouTube / YouTube Music
- ☐ Check other priority DSPs
- ☐ Confirm audio plays correctly
- ☐ Confirm artwork
- ☐ Confirm song title
- ☐ Confirm artist name
- ☐ Confirm featured artists
- ☐ Confirm explicit/clean version

- ☐ Confirm correct artist profile
- ☐ Confirm smart link redirects properly

If something is wrong, document it immediately.

Take screenshots.

Save URLs.

Contact the appropriate distributor or platform support channel.

2. UPDATE YOUR LINKS

- ☐ Change pre-save language to Listen Now
- ☐ Update link hub
- ☐ Update website
- ☐ Update Instagram bio
- ☐ Update TikTok bio
- ☐ Update pinned posts where useful
- ☐ Add direct DSP links if appropriate

Nobody should click yesterday's link and wonder where the song went.

3. POST THE MAIN ANNOUNCEMENT

Your first post should answer:

What dropped?

Who made it?

Why should somebody care?

Where can they hear it?

Example structure:

[SONG TITLE] IS OUT NOW.

One or two lines about the record.

One clear CTA.

Listen now → link in bio.

4. POST SHORT-FORM CONTENT

You do not need to upload everything at once.

Choose your strongest clip.

- ☐ TikTok
- ☐ Instagram Reel
- ☐ YouTube Short
- ☐ Story
- ☐ X video / post
- ☐ Facebook if relevant to your audience

Save additional content for the days after release.

5. CONTACT YOUR INNER CIRCLE

Reach out to people who actually care about your music.

- ☐ Collaborators
- ☐ Friends/supporters
- ☐ Email list

- ☐ Text list
- ☐ Community members
- ☐ Relevant creators
- ☐ DJs / curators you already know

Do not spam strangers with:

“Yo bro check my song.”

Personal outreach works better when there is an actual relationship.

6. ENGAGE

- ☐ Reply to comments
- ☐ Thank people who share
- ☐ Repost Stories
- ☐ Save useful reactions
- ☐ Respond to DMs
- ☐ Encourage genuine conversation

Do not post the song and disappear.

7. CHECK PLAYLIST ACTIVITY

- ☐ Open your artist analytics
- ☐ Look for early playlist activity
- ☐ Save meaningful placements
- ☐ Add them to the Playlist Tracker
- ☐ Screenshot placements worth documenting

Do not obsessively refresh every few minutes.

You are collecting information, not watching a slot machine.

8. CREATE YOUR BASELINE

Record your early numbers.

- ☐ Streams / plays
- ☐ Listeners
- ☐ Saves
- ☐ Followers
- ☐ Playlist activity
- ☐ YouTube views
- ☐ Social reach
- ☐ Engagement
- ☐ Link clicks if available

This gives you something to compare against later.

RELEASE-DAY DON'TS

Do not:

Spam the same link everywhere with no context.

Buy fake streams.

Buy fake playlist placement.

Argue with people who do not like the song.

Delete the campaign because the first few hours are slow.

Post every piece of content you created on the same day.

The release can keep moving after release day.

Verify it.
Post it.
Talk to people.
Track what happens.

30-DAY CONTENT CALENDAR

One song can create more than one post.

A common mistake is promoting a song heavily for one day and then disappearing.

This calendar gives you 30 different opportunities to keep the release alive.

You do not have to use every idea.

Choose the ones that fit your music, personality, audience, and platforms.

DAY 1 — RELEASE ANNOUNCEMENT

Content: Main release post

Goal: Awareness

CTA: Listen now

DAY 2 — BEST SONG CLIP

Use the strongest 10–30 seconds of the record.

Goal: Hook new listeners

CTA: Full song in bio

DAY 3 — STORY BEHIND THE SONG

Explain what inspired the record.

Goal: Emotional connection

DAY 4 — LYRIC MOMENT

Highlight one memorable line.

Use text, performance footage, animation, or artwork.

Goal: Give listeners something quotable

DAY 5 — BEHIND THE SCENES

Studio clip, writing session, beat creation, artwork process, or video setup.

Goal: Show the process

DAY 6 — COVER ART BREAKDOWN

Explain the cover concept or visual world.

Goal: Deepen the release identity

DAY 7 — WEEK ONE CHECK-IN

Thank listeners.

Share something meaningful from the first week.

Avoid bragging about tiny numbers just to manufacture hype.

Goal: Community

DAY 8 — PERFORMANCE CLIP

Rap, sing, perform, or lip-sync a section.

Goal: Put the artist back at the center

DAY 9 — PRODUCER SPOTLIGHT

Talk about the beat or producer.

Tag them when appropriate.

Goal: Collaboration + discovery

DAY 10 — FEATURED ARTIST SPOTLIGHT

If applicable, introduce the collaborator.

Goal: Audience crossover

No feature? Use this day for another creative angle.

DAY 11 — “DID YOU CATCH THIS?”

Point out a lyric, sound, sample, ad-lib, or production detail people may have missed.

Goal: Encourage another listen

DAY 12 — VISUALIZER CLIP

Post a section of the official visualizer or Canvas-inspired visual.

Goal: Strengthen the visual identity

DAY 13 — PERSONAL POST

Explain what releasing the song means to you.

Keep it real.

Goal: Human connection

DAY 14 — TWO-WEEK REMINDER

Not:

“STREAM MY SONG AGAIN.”

Instead, introduce a fresh clip or message.

Goal: Re-engagement

DAY 15 — FAVORITE LINE

Share your favorite lyric and explain why.

Goal: Storytelling

DAY 16 — LISTENER REACTION

Share a genuine comment, Story, message, or reaction with permission when appropriate.

Goal: Social proof

Do not manufacture reactions.

DAY 17 — HOW IT STARTED

Share an early demo, voice memo, rough lyric, beat preview, or concept.

Goal: Transformation story

DAY 18 — HOW IT ENDED

Show the finished version beside the early idea.

Goal: Creative process

DAY 19 — ARTIST WORLD / LIFESTYLE CONTENT

Show something connected to the artist identity beyond the track.

Goal: Turn song listeners into artist followers

DAY 20 — ASK A QUESTION

Examples:

Favorite line?

Which verse hits harder?

Should we drop a remix?

What did this song remind you of?

Goal: Conversation

DAY 21 — THREE-WEEK CHECK-IN

Look at your analytics.

Create more content similar to what performed best.

Goal: Learn and adjust

DAY 22 — ALTERNATE CLIP

Use a different section of the song.

Do not assume the hook is the only marketable part.

Goal: Test another entry point

DAY 23 — TEXT / LYRIC VIDEO

Simple vertical lyric content.

Goal: Shareability

DAY 24 — CREATIVE CONTEXT

Explain the sound.

Examples:

Why you chose the BPM.

Why the beat is sparse.

Why the chorus repeats.

Why the vocal sounds a certain way.

Goal: Music appreciation

DAY 25 — THROWBACK / INFLUENCE POST

Share something that influenced the record.

Do not imply endorsement from another artist.

Goal: Context

DAY 26 — PLAYLIST / PLACEMENT MOMENT

If the song received a legitimate placement, share it.

If not, use another content idea.

Never invent placement.

Goal: Credibility

DAY 27 — FAN / COMMUNITY CONTENT

Highlight somebody who supported the release.

Goal: Make supporters feel seen

DAY 28 — WHAT I LEARNED

Share something you learned from releasing the song.

Goal: Authenticity

DAY 29 — NEXT CHAPTER TEASE

Give a small clue about what comes next.

Goal: Move attention forward without abandoning the current song

DAY 30 — MONTH-ONE RECAP

Review:

- What worked?
- What content performed?
- Where did listeners come from?
- What surprised you?
- What will you do differently?
- Then update your analytics tracker.

Goal: Turn the campaign into information.

30-DAY CONTENT CALENDAR — BLANK VERSION

Use this for your own rollout.

Day	Platform	Content	Format	CTA	Status
1					
2					
3					
4					
5					
6					
7					
8					
9					
10					
11					
12					
13					
14					
15					
16					
17					
18					
19					
20					
21					
22					
23					
24					
25					
26					

Day	Platform	Content	Format	CTA	Status
27					
28					
29					
30					

CONTENT RULE: ONE SONG, MANY ANGLES

Think of each post as answering a different question.

What is it?

Release announcement.

What does it sound like?

Snippet.

Why did you make it?

Story.

What does it mean?

Lyrics.

How did you make it?

Behind the scenes.

Who made it?

Collaborator spotlight.

Do people care?

Real reactions.

What happened?

Analytics / recap.

That is how one song becomes a campaign.

PROMOTION PLANNER

Decide what you are doing before you start posting.

Random promotion creates random results.

Use this planner to connect each piece of content to a purpose.

RELEASE INFORMATION

Artist:

Song:

Release date:

Campaign start date:

Campaign end date:

PRIMARY CAMPAIGN GOAL

Choose your main goal.

- ☐ Streams
- ☐ Saves
- ☐ Followers
- ☐ Awareness
- ☐ Pre-saves
- ☐ Video views
- ☐ Email subscribers
- ☐ Community growth
- ☐ Ticket sales
- ☐ Another goal: _____

You can care about several metrics.

Still choose a primary goal.

WHO IS THIS FOR?

Describe the listener.

Not:

Everyone who likes music.

Be more useful.

Examples:

West Coast rap listeners.

Independent R&B fans.

Drum-and-bass listeners.

Fans of storytelling rap.

Listeners who follow underground artists.

My likely listener:

CORE MESSAGE

Finish this sentence:

People should care about this release because...

PRIMARY CONTENT PILLARS

Choose 3–5.

- ☐ Music snippets
- ☐ Performance
- ☐ Storytelling
- ☐ Lyrics
- ☐ Behind the scenes
- ☐ Artist personality
- ☐ Visual world
- ☐ Education/process

- ☐ Collaboration
- ☐ Community
- ☐ Humor
- ☐ Other: _____

PLATFORM PLAN

INSTAGRAM

What will I post?

Frequency:

Main CTA:

TIKTOK

What will I post?

Frequency:

Main CTA:

YOUTUBE

What will I post?

Frequency:

Main CTA:

X / OTHER SOCIAL

What will I post?

Frequency:

Main CTA:

EMAIL / TEXT / COMMUNITY

What will I send?

When?

Main CTA:

CAMPAIGN CONTENT TRACKER

For each piece of content, record:

Date:

Platform:

Content:

Format:

CTA: _____

Status:

- ☐ Idea
- ☐ Created
- ☐ Scheduled
- ☐ Posted

Link:

Result / Notes:

CALL-TO-ACTION BANK

Rotate your calls to action.

LISTEN

Listen now.

Full song in bio.

Hear the full record.

SAVE

Save it if you want to come back to it.

Add it to your library.

SHARE

Send this to somebody who would understand it.

Share it with somebody who needs this song.

COMMENT

Favorite line?

Which part hits hardest?

FOLLOW

Follow for the next release.

WATCH

Full visualizer on YouTube.

Do not ask the audience to do five things at once.

One piece of content should usually have one primary CTA.

CONTENT BATCHING

Instead of making one post every day from scratch:

Choose one session.

Create:

- ☐ 3–5 short clips
- ☐ 2 lyric graphics
- ☐ 1 story-behind-the-song video
- ☐ 1 performance clip
- ☐ 1 behind-the-scenes post
- ☐ 1 release reminder

Save them.

Schedule or post them over time.

Batching protects your energy.

PROMOTION BUDGET

You do not need paid ads to use this kit.

If you are spending money, write the plan down first.

Total budget:

\$ _____

Possible categories:

Content creation: \$ _____

Advertising: \$ _____

Influencer / creator work: \$ _____

PR / outreach: \$ _____

Video / artwork: \$ _____

Other: \$ _____

What result would make this spend worthwhile?

Never spend simply because somebody says:

“You have to invest in yourself.”

Know what you are buying.

COLLABORATOR PROMOTION PLAN

If other artists or producers are involved:

Person:

What they agreed to do:

Date:

Assets they need:

Do not assume collaborators know what you expect.

Communicate.

RELEASE ASSET CHECK

Before the campaign begins:

- ☐ Cover artwork
- ☐ Portrait version
- ☐ Landscape version if needed
- ☐ Story-size artwork
- ☐ Vertical video clips
- ☐ Square graphics
- ☐ Visualizer
- ☐ Canvas
- ☐ Lyrics
- ☐ Artist photos / character images
- ☐ Smart link
- ☐ DSP links
- ☐ Captions
- ☐ Credits
- ☐ Hashtags if useful

Put everything in one release folder.

WEEKLY CAMPAIGN REVIEW

Once per week, ask:

What performed best?

What performed worst?

What got the most comments?

What got the most shares?

What drove actual listeners?

What should I make more of?

What should I stop doing?

Then adjust.

Do not continue posting something for 30 days simply because it was written in a plan.

A plan should guide you.

Data should improve it.

DON'T CONFUSE ACTIVITY WITH PROMOTION

Posting 20 times does not automatically mean you ran a good campaign.

Ask:

Did people watch?

Did people click?

Did people listen?

Did people save?

Did people follow?

Did people share?

Did you learn anything?

Promotion should create information as well as exposure.

FINAL PROMOTE CHECK

Before leaving O4 PROMOTE, you should have:

- ☐ Created and tested your pre-save / smart link
- ☐ Prepared your release-day assets
- ☐ Completed your Release-Day Checklist
- ☐ Planned at least 30 days of possible content angles
- ☐ Identified your main campaign goal
- ☐ Identified your likely audience
- ☐ Chosen your primary content pillars
- ☐ Planned your major platforms
- ☐ Selected clear calls to action
- ☐ Organized your promotional assets
- ☐ Started tracking what content actually works

**Don't promote once.
Tell the story from different angles.
Give people a clear next action.
Watch what works.
Do more of that.**

05 • INDEPENDENT ARTIST RELEASE KIT

TRACK

See what happened
after the song dropped.

INCLUDES:

- Playlist Tracker
- Post-Release Analytics Tracker

PLAN • PITCH • PROMOTE • TRACK

PLAYLIST TRACKER

Know where your song is showing up.

Playlist activity can matter, but screenshots and memory are not a tracking system.

Use this tracker to record placements, changes, and patterns over time.

PLAYLIST ENTRY

Song:

Playlist name:

Platform:

Playlist type:

- ☐ Editorial
- ☐ Algorithmic
- ☐ User-created / curator
- ☐ Other: _____

Curator / owner, if known:

Playlist URL:

Date added:

Date removed, if applicable:

Followers / estimated reach, if visible:

How did you discover the placement?

- ☐ Artist analytics
- ☐ Platform notification
- ☐ Curator outreach
- ☐ Listener sent it
- ☐ Manual search
- ☐ Other: _____

Notes:

PLAYLIST TRACKING TABLE

Playlist	Platform	Type	Date Added	Date Removed	Reach	Source	Notes

WHAT TO WATCH

Ask:

- ☐ Did streams increase after placement?
- ☐ Did saves increase?
- ☐ Did followers increase?
- ☐ Did listeners come from a new city or country?
- ☐ Did the placement last?
- ☐ Did it lead to other discovery?
- ☐ Does the playlist audience actually fit your music?

A smaller relevant playlist can be more useful than a huge playlist full of the wrong listeners.

PLAYLIST RED FLAGS

Be careful if someone:

- ☐ Guarantees official editorial placement
- ☐ Guarantees a specific number of streams
- ☐ Sells suspicious playlist placement
- ☐ Refuses to explain where traffic comes from
- ☐ Uses bots or artificial traffic
- ☐ Requests your DSP password
- ☐ Pressures you to pay immediately

Track real audience activity—not fake numbers.

POST-RELEASE ANALYTICS TRACKER

Turn your release into information.

Analytics are not there to make you obsess over numbers.

They should help you answer:

What worked?

What didn't?

What should I do differently next time?

STARTING BASELINE

Record these around release day.

Date:

Spotify followers:

YouTube subscribers:

Instagram followers:

TikTok followers:

Email subscribers:

Other:

WEEKLY MUSIC PERFORMANCE

Week	Streams	Listeners	Saves	Playlist Adds	Followers	Notes
Week 1						
Week 2						
Week 3						
Week 4						

Try to record your numbers at roughly the same interval each week.

CONTENT PERFORMANCE

Date	Platform	Content	Views/Reach	Likes	Comments	Shares	Saves	Clicks

Ask:

Which post got the most attention?

Which post got the most shares?

Which post appears to have driven listeners?

VIDEO PERFORMANCE

For Reels, Shorts, TikTok, visualizers, and other video content, track what your platform makes available:

- ☐ Views
- ☐ Reach
- ☐ Watch time
- ☐ Completion rate
- ☐ Likes
- ☐ Comments
- ☐ Shares
- ☐ Saves
- ☐ Followers/subscribers gained
- ☐ Link clicks

Best-performing video:

Why do you think it worked?

TRAFFIC SOURCES

Where are people discovering the release?

- ☐ Spotify playlists
- ☐ Spotify profile/catalog
- ☐ Algorithmic discovery
- ☐ Instagram

- ☐ TikTok
- ☐ YouTube
- ☐ X
- ☐ Facebook
- ☐ Email
- ☐ Text/SMS
- ☐ Direct links
- ☐ Creator/influencer content
- ☐ Press/blogs
- ☐ Paid advertising
- ☐ Other: _____

Strongest source:

Why?

AUDIENCE GROWTH

Spotify followers gained:

YouTube subscribers gained:

Instagram followers gained:

TikTok followers gained:

Email subscribers gained:

Other audience growth:

You are looking for direction, not just big numbers.

PAID PROMOTION TRACKER

If you spent money:

Channel	Spend	Goal	Result	Cost per Result	Notes

Total campaign spend:

\$_____

What did the money actually produce?

If you cannot explain what an ad or campaign produced, do not automatically spend more next time.

REVENUE TRACKING

Where relevant:

Streaming revenue:

\$_____

Direct music sales:

\$ _____

Merchandise:

\$ _____

Downloads / Bandcamp:

\$ _____

Tickets / performances:

\$ _____

Other:

\$ _____

Total tracked revenue:

\$ _____

Royalty reporting can arrive much later than the actual streams, so this section may need to be updated over time.

WEEK 1 REVIEW

Best-performing content:

Strongest traffic source:

Best playlist activity:

Biggest surprise:

Next week I should do more of:

WEEK 2 REVIEW

What is still working?

What is slowing down?

What should I repeat or remix?

What should I stop doing?

30-DAY RELEASE REVIEW

After roughly one month, step back and look at the entire campaign.

MUSIC

How did the song perform compared with your expectations?

CONTENT

Which type of content worked best?

PLATFORM

Which platform gave you the strongest response?

AUDIENCE

Did you reach the kind of listeners you wanted?

PROMOTION

Which promotional action produced the clearest result?

MONEY

Total spent:

\$ _____

What did that spending accomplish?

WHAT DID WE LEARN?

1. What worked better than expected?
2. What performed worse than expected?
3. Which content got the strongest response?
4. Which platform mattered most?
5. Which discovery or playlist source mattered most?
6. What did I waste time on?
7. What spending was worthwhile?
8. What spending was NOT worthwhile?
9. What should I start earlier next time?
10. What will I change on the next release?

BUILD THE NEXT RELEASE FROM THIS ONE

NEXT TIME, I WILL KEEP:

NEXT TIME, I WILL STOP:

NEXT TIME, I WILL START:

THE ONE THING I MOST WANT TO IMPROVE:

FINAL RELEASE SCORECARD

Rate yourself from 1–5.

Planning:

1 2 3 4 5

Distribution setup:

1 2 3 4 5

DSP profile readiness:

1 2 3 4 5

Spotify pitch:

1 2 3 4 5

Pre-release promotion:

1 2 3 4 5

Release-day execution:

1 2 3 4 5

Content consistency:

1 2 3 4 5

Playlist tracking:

1 2 3 4 5

Analytics tracking:

1 2 3 4 5

Overall rollout:

1 2 3 4 5

TOTAL

_____ / 50

The point is not to give yourself a grade.

The point is to create a baseline so the next release is better organized than this one.

ARCHIVE THE RELEASE

Create one permanent folder for every release.

Save:

- ☐ Final master
- ☐ Cover artwork
- ☐ Metadata
- ☐ ISRC
- ☐ UPC
- ☐ Distributor confirmation
- ☐ DSP links
- ☐ Spotify pitch
- ☐ Canvas
- ☐ Promotional assets
- ☐ Playlist records
- ☐ Analytics
- ☐ Campaign notes
- ☐ Final review

Example folder name:

Artist – Song Title – 2026 Release Archive

Over time, this becomes the operating history of your catalog.

FINAL TRACK CHECK

Before closing out the campaign:

- ☐ Playlist Tracker updated

- ☐ Analytics Tracker updated
- ☐ Best-performing content identified
- ☐ Strongest traffic source identified
- ☐ Campaign spending reviewed
- ☐ Audience growth recorded
- ☐ Lessons documented
- ☐ Changes for the next release written down
- ☐ Release archive created

Don't just release music.

Collect information.

Learn what worked.

Carry that knowledge into the next release.

YOU BUILT THE SYSTEM.

Now use it.

A release does not need to be perfect to teach you something. Run the process. Track what happened. Keep what worked. Fix what did not. Then make the next rollout cleaner, earlier, and easier.

PLAN → PITCH → PROMOTE → TRACK → LEARN → REPEAT

EDITABLE COMPANION TOOLS

Your purchase also includes an editable Content Calendar, Playlist Tracker, and Analytics Tracker. Access the Google Sheets version from your product access page and make your own copy before editing.

PLATFORM NOTES & DISCLAIMER

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Spotify references checked for this edition:

- [Pitching music and videos to Spotify playlist editors](#)
- [Getting music on Release Radar](#)
- [New Releases - Spotify for Artists](#)
- [Canvas - Spotify for Artists](#)

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